Hollybrook Infant and Junior Schools

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Dream, Believe, Achieve, Care

At the Hollybrook Schools we aim to ensure that learning is meaningful, stimulating and challenging, reflecting the ever-changing world around us. We want to empower children to be independent, resilient, creative, collaborative, responsible and feel valued as members of the community with a passion for learning. We believe in educating the whole child, nurturing every child's talents to realise their potential and achieve their dreams.

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Approved by: _____(Headteacher)_ Date:_____

Governor signature: _____ Date:_____

Vision

At Hollybrook Infant we believe that we are all learners; everyone can learn and make progress through a fun, exciting and broad curriculum. We strive to create an environment where everyone feels safe and secure.

Expectations

Children are expected to attend school regularly and arrive on time to ensure the best continuity for the child. We support and encourage our parents to be actively involved in their children's learning and share some activities together such as reading, practising sounds and home learning activities. We expect our staff to make sure the children feel valued and know they are part of the whole school community. We have a high expectation for the children's behaviour (see behaviour policy) and develop appropriate attitudes to learning and school life.

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to the learning and development of all children from birth to the end of the Reception Year.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. It is not just a preparation for the next stage but is vitally important in itself.

Learning for children is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practice, rehearse, repeat, revise, and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. During the Foundation Stage, many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through playing and talking.

Aims/Objectives

At Hollybrook Infant School we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children, thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent learners. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and carers to help every child reach their full potential.

As outlined in the 'Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage':
'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances.'

The Framework is a means of ensuring high standards of education and care that will reassure parents that their child's development is being fully supported. It underpins all future learning by supporting and fostering the children's personal, social, and emotional wellbeing. It encourages positive attitudes and dispositions towards learning in the children and promotes learning through play.

Statutory Framework of EYFS

At Hollybrook we follow the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021. Within this framework there are four guiding principles which shape are practice.

These are:

1. **Every child is a unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
2. Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships.**
3. Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments** with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
4. Children **develop and learn at different rates**. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven curriculum areas, using play as the vehicle for learning;
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice;
- Provide early intervention for those children who require additional support;
- Work in partnership with parents and carers;
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment and by the children's own ideas and interests;
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated, child-initiated and adult supported;
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors.

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE CURRICULUM

We plan an exciting and **ambitious** curriculum based on our observations and interactions of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve.

Our curriculum encompasses seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas which are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships, and thriving are the Prime Areas.

These are split into:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social, and emotional development.

The Specific areas are:

- literacy

- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

Throughout their time in the Reception Year our children partake in an ambitious curriculum which is designed in a sequential way to ensure progress towards the end of reception goals. These goals are defined as Early Learning Goals (ELGs).

Our curriculum incorporates learning through play, learning by adults modelling, by observing each other and through guided learning and direct teaching. It is also important to highlight that our plans are flexible to allow us to respond quickly to children's new interests and/or needs.

Weaving throughout the EYFS curriculum at Hollybrook are the **Characteristics of Effective Learning.**

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

These elements underpin how we reflect on each child's development and adjust our practice accordingly. Supporting children in their individual learning behaviour and observing the context of children's play is essential.

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they can explore, think creatively and be active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

We create medium term plans based on a series of topics each of which offers experiences in all seven areas of learning.

At the beginning of each topic the children are encouraged to share their ideas for learning experiences; These ideas are then used to inform our weekly planning, alongside our observations which identify areas to focus on.

We always remain flexible to allow for unplanned circumstances and children's responses. Our planning is continually evaluated by all staff to ensure that children's individual 'Next Steps in Learning' and personalised learning needs are met.

Children will engage in whole group and small group activities alongside their independent learning. There are also allocated times for whole class daily 'carpet learning sessions'.

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those which are planned by adults. During child initiated time the adults in class interact and play with the children and when appropriate stretch and challenge them further through their interests and themes of play and exploration.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and build these into our practice. We create a stimulating learning environment to encourage children to free flow between inside and outdoors as far as possible.

ASSESSMENT

When children start school, teachers complete a statutory reception baseline assessment. Teachers also complete their own baseline by observing the child, gathering information from previous settings and parents, and working alongside the child in their play. This information is then used to ascertain starting points and shape the curriculum for the next stage in their learning.

Assessment in Reception is carried out in line with the 'Early Years Foundation Stage Framework'. Staff will capture key moments and add these to the child's online 'learning journey' on Tapestry. They also gather other evidence of the children's progress and achievements from their interactions, any ongoing assessments of the work children have produced and the stages they are working at for their reading.

At the end of Reception in the Summer Term, teachers use their professional knowledge and judgement of the child as well as looking at any evidence collected to inform the final EYFS Profile assessment. To ensure we have a complete, accurate picture of a child's achievements, parents are strongly encouraged to add 'wow' moments from home on to Tapestry.

This information will be used to inform you of your child's achievements and will help prepare your child's Year 1 teacher with information they need to support, challenge or extend your child's learning and development.

At the end of the year the EYFS profile provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements including whether they have reached a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). Children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELG) by the class teacher.

The children are assessed as achieving a 1 or 2 against each area of the EYFS curriculum:

- 2 = Expected ELG – meeting the expected level
- 1 = Emerging ELG – not yet meeting the expected level

This profile data is the statutory data that is sent to the Local Authority and used to help school benchmark and identify improvements.

SAFETY INCLUDING SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE REQUIREMENTS

The safety and welfare of our children is paramount, and we have robust policies and procedures in place to ensure their safety.

In Reception we provide a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to take risks, follow rules and stay safe. We comply with the welfare requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage and understand that we must:

- Promote the welfare of all children;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively and appropriately;
- Ensure all adults working with children are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the environment is safe and all equipment and furniture is fit for purpose;
- Ensure all children have an enriching and enjoyable learning experience.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways; including the provision of nutritious fruit snacks, access to water throughout the day, allocating significant time for physical development and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Staff and visitors are prohibited from using their mobile phones in our classrooms as per our mobile phone policy, only the class iPads are used to photograph children (for Tapestry observations and assessment purposes) and children must be appropriately dressed in photographs.

Two EYFS teaching assistants and one qualified teacher in the base hold the Full Paediatric First Aid Qualification, which is a statutory requirement of the EYFS.

The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is in place to ensure the safety of all stakeholders at The Hollybrook Schools. Backing up this policy is a dedicated safeguarding team which includes three Designated Safeguarding Leads, one of whom is the Deputy Head Teacher. Staff have access to CPOMs, an electronic safeguarding system to log any concerns regarding any aspects of safeguarding and behaviour. All staff are vigilant in reporting concerns.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve the Early Learning Goals.

We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents/carers and outside agencies.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS/CARERS

We recognise the central importance of parents/carers as children's first educators. We believe they have a significant role to play in the lifelong education of their child. We strive to create and maintain partnerships with parents/carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways.

- Holding information evenings before the children start school;
- Talking to them about their child's interests and needs during our introductory sessions in school and at our one to one meetings with parents and their child at the beginning of September
- Being welcoming and approachable and having an open-door approach for parents to voice concerns/ask questions;
- Inviting them to a parent consultation in the Autumn and Spring Terms to discuss how their child has settled and share progress and next steps for learning;
- Valuing parents' contributions to learning journeys;
- Inviting parents into school to complete an activity with their child and to share learning;
- Encouraging parents to read with their child at home and make comments in their reading record books;
- Providing topic overviews for each topic, so that they can support their child at home;
- Inviting parents into school for 'parent phonics' sessions to demonstrate how we teach phonics and help them support their child;
- Welcoming parents as volunteers into our school;
- Providing parents with an annual mid-year report and an end of year summary report detailing achievements and their child's EYFS profile;

- We also draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting to talk about their lives, work and experiences.

TRANSITIONS

Transitions are carefully planned for and significant time is given to ensure continuity of learning and care. At times of transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings. Children attend several introductory sessions with their parents/carers to develop familiarity with the settings and practitioners. Our Reception staff also visit the local nurseries and preschools in return, to familiarise themselves with the children.

At the end of the EYFS, our Reception teacher meets with the Year 1 teacher to liaise with them and discuss the individual children and their specific needs, interests, strengths and areas for development. The children's assessment data and workbooks are sent with them to Year 1 so that their new teachers can plan for their 'next steps in learning' from the moment they enter their new class. Children spend several sessions towards the end of the school year in the Year 1 classroom to ensure that they are familiar and comfortable with their new teacher and are 'next year ready'.

Monitoring of the EYFS

We are committed to providing the best possible experiences for our children. The EYFS Leader is responsible for monitoring provision, teaching and learning and children's progress. Information is shared with the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Subject Leaders and Reception team as appropriate and any necessary actions are taken.

All adults in the Reception team have a key role in children's learning and development. Therefore, they are required to be knowledgeable and skilled in the EYFS curriculum. Any training needs for existing or new members of staff are identified and addressed as part of performance management targets.